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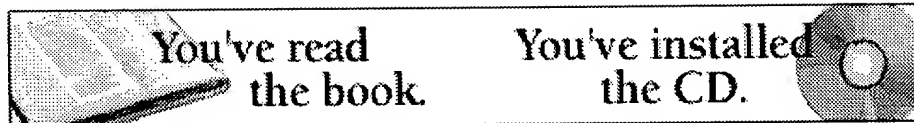
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5 entries found for **only**.

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only[1,adjective]  
only[2,adverb]  
only[3,conjunction]  
eyes only  
read-only memory

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Main Entry: <sup>2</sup>**only**

Function: *adverb*

Date: 14th century

**1 a** : as a single fact or instance and nothing more or different :

**MERELY** <has *only* lost one election -- George Orwell> **b** :

**SOLELY, EXCLUSIVELY** <known *only* to him>

**2** : at the very least <it was *only* too true>

**3 a** : in the final outcome <will *only* make you sick> **b** : with  
nevertheless the final result <won the battles, *only* to lose the war>

**4 a** : as recently as <*only* last week> **b** : in the immediate past  
<*only* just talked to her>

**usage** The placement of *only* in a sentence has been a source of  
studious commentary since the 18th century, most of it intended to  
prove by force of argument that prevailing standard usage is  
wrong. After 200 years of preachment the following observations  
may be made: the position of *only* in standard spoken English is  
not fixed, since ambiguity is avoided through sentence stress; in  
casual prose that keeps close to the rhythms of speech *only* is often  
placed where it would be in speech; and in edited and more formal  
prose *only* tends to be placed immediately before the word or  
words it modifies.

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